

Military Resistance 13L3



**Islamic State Wins Again:
Succeeds In Provoking Backlash
Against Muslims;
“They Want People To Say—They
Hate Us, And So We Hate Them”
“This Is The Foundation Of Their
Success”**

12/10/15 by YAROSLAV TROFIMOV, Wall Street Journal

Before dawn in February 2006, militants sent by the precursor of today’s Islamic State sneaked into the golden-domed Shiite shrine in the Iraqi city of Samarra, disarmed the guards and rigged the building with explosives.

By most accounts, nobody died in the explosion itself, which blew off the dome and reduced the venerated mosque to rubble.

But the bombing achieved its goal of baiting Iraq's Shiite majority into a spree of retaliation against the country's Sunnis. Thousands died in the wave of sectarian killings that began hours later, and the social fabric of Iraq was torn forever.

In this environment of sectarian strife, many Iraqi Sunnis eventually came to view Islamic State as their only, however unpalatable, protector.

That is why just a few hundred of the group's militants were able to seize Iraq's second-largest city of Mosul, home to 1.5 million people, in June 2014.

This lesson of Samarra now looms over the West. Islamic State is using the same playbook in its attacks on Western targets this year—be it the ones directly organized by the group, such as the Nov. 13 massacre in Paris, or ones apparently only inspired, such as the shooting in San Bernardino.

The group's objective is clear: to try to bait Western societies into an indiscriminate backlash against millions of Muslims living in Europe and the U.S.

It is a backlash that, if successfully provoked, would disrupt these Muslims' bonds with their countries of citizenship and residence and—as it happened with Iraq's Sunnis—validate Islamic State's claim to be their only protector.

“ISIS thrives on polarization,” said Hassan Hassan, an expert on the group at the Royal Institute of International Affairs in London.

“They want people to say—they hate us, and so we hate them. This is the foundation of their success.”

Islamic State itself outlined this strategy this year in its Dabiq magazine.

The treatise posited as the group's goal the “extinction of the gray zone”—otherwise known as peaceful coexistence between Muslims and non-Muslims in the West.

Muslims living in Western countries, Dabiq predicted, “will quickly find themselves between one of two choices”—abandon their faith, or join Islamic State “and thereby escape persecution from crusader governments and citizens.”

This strategy of provoking a societal split and polarization isn't exactly new. It builds on a 2004 book “Management of Savagery,” which outlines how cleavages in societies can be created and exploited and is among the most influential pieces of recent jihadist literature. And al Qaeda's Sept. 11, 2001, attacks on America had a similar goal.

Back then, however, President George W. Bush worked to contain the danger to a great extent. Six days after the twin towers came down, he visited a mosque in Washington to proclaim that “the face of terror is not the true face of Islam.”

He also said that women who wear the hijab “must feel comfortable going outside their homes” in America, and that those who take out their anger on ordinary Muslims “represent the worst of humankind.”

The reaction, on both shores of the Atlantic, is different today—even though Islamic State’s attacks in the West, so far, have been orders of magnitude less deadly or disruptive.

There have been no retaliatory killings or pogroms. But openly racist language about Muslims, unlike 14 years ago, is no longer confined to the political fringe.

In France, the far-right National Front received a major boost following the Paris attack, becoming the country’s largest party in regional elections. It is likely to win control of several regional administrations in the second round next week.

It is no longer beyond the realm of possibility that the Front’s leader, Marine Le Pen, may become president in 2017. Some opinion polls placed her ahead of the incumbent.

Such successes by National Front “tell a significant number of Muslims that they are not welcome in France, that any dream of assimilation for Muslims is impossible, discrediting the moderate figures and empowering the radicals,” said Daniel Byman, director of research at the Center for Middle East Policy at the Brookings Institution.

In the U.S., the leading Republican presidential hopeful, Donald Trump, went even further than National Front’s anti-immigrant rhetoric in France, saying this week that he would prohibit all Muslims from entering the United States.

If Islamic State succeeds in carrying out more attacks in the West in coming months, something that terrorism experts and counter-terrorism officials say is a near-certainty, such polarization is only likely to intensify.

And it is this tearing of the fabric of Western societies, rather than the physical impact of Islamic State’s actual killings, that is likely to inflict the biggest damage, they warn.

“What I worry about is the hysteria that is engulfing the West,” said Issandr Amrani, head of the North Africa project at the International Crisis Group, a global conflict-resolution organization.

“It’s both the mainstreaming of bigoted ideas, and of the idea that ISIS is more popular than it actually is.

“And the more ISIS terrifies the world, the more romantic and nihilistic appeal it will have among alienated young men who want to rebel.”

MORE:

The Most Effective Recruiting Sgt. For The Islamic State



Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump called for a ban on Muslims entering the U.S. in response to the shooting spree in San Bernardino, Calif., by two Muslims who the FBI said had been radicalized. PHOTO:RANDALL HILL/REUTERS

ACTION REPORTS

Outreach To Troops Deploying To Guantanamo: “It Took A While But We Finally Made It To Cuba” “And In Proper Hands”

From: Alan S
To: Military Resistance Newsletter
Sent: December 04, 2015
Subject: Outreach to Troops Deployed To Guantanamo

12/4/15

In a NYC commuter terminal today, a very friendly young National Guard sergeant told me he was deploying to Guantanamo Bay soon.

He said he liked history I gave him a copy of "Soldiers in Revolt" and he was grateful to "have something to read on the way."

I also gave him and his partner, a younger private, 2 DVDs (1 of "Authority & Expectations" and one of "Sir! No Sir!") as they wanted me to save the rest of my supply because they could exchange what I gave them between themselves.

The same went for copies of MR Newsletters and our reprint of MR 13K5, intended for a meeting tomorrow in Manhattan, but, clearly, further reading for the troops – especially in Guantanamo.

It took a while but we finally made it to Cuba – and in proper hands.

NOTES:

Authority & Expectations: An Iraq Veteran Against The War condemns the war and their government:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tyfkLubnyBw>

Sir No Sir: Military Resistance Vietnam Days

http://www.sirnosir.com/the_film/storefront.htm

MR 13K5: Military Resistance Newsletter with front page report: Greek Soldiers Will Disobey Orders To Act Against Refugees:

<http://www.militaryproject.org>

MORE:

ACTION REPORTS WANTED: FROM YOU!

An effective way to encourage others to support members of the armed forces organizing to resist the Imperial war is to report what you do.

If you've carried out organized contact with troops on active duty, at base gates, airports, or anywhere else, send a report in to Military Resistance for the Action Reports section.

Same for contact with National Guard and/or Reserve components.

They don't have to be long. Just clear, and direct action reports about what work was done and how.

If there were favorable responses, say so.

If there were unfavorable responses or problems, don't leave them out. Reporting what went wrong and/or got screwed up is especially important, so that others may learn from you what to expect, and how to avoid similar problems if possible.

If you are not planning or engaging in outreach to the troops, you have nothing to report.

NOTE WELL:

Do not make public any information that could compromise the work.

Identifying information – locations, personnel – will be omitted from the reports.

Whether you are serving in the armed forces or not, do not identify members of the armed forces organizing to stop the wars.

If accidentally included, that information will not be published.

The sole exception: occasions when a member of the armed services explicitly directs identifying information be published in reporting on the action.

MORE:

Military Initiative

Organizing Committee Mission Statement:

July 4, 1776

Prudence, indeed, will dictate that Governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shewn that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed.

But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same Object evinces a design to reduce them under absolute Despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new Guards for their future security.

1. Members of the armed forces have the right and duty to defend civilians from dictatorships and to aid civilian movements against dictatorships.

This applies whether dictatorship is imposed by force of arms or is imposed when those in command of the resources of society use their wealth for buying politicians to control the government.

The armed forces are not for use by politicians or corporations to attack movements fighting for improvement in the lives of working class citizens, or to attack the rights and liberties of Americans written in the Bill of Rights of the Constitution

2. The armed forces are not for use in wars of Empire.

Military Initiative is for immediate withdrawal of all U.S. troops from Afghanistan and Iraq.

Members of the armed forces organizing to defeat wars of empire will receive encouragement and support.

The long term objective is to assist in eliminating wars of empire by eliminating all empires.

Nations attacked by Empires have the right to independence and to resist invasion.

3. Efforts to increase democratic rights in every society, organization, movement, and within the armed forces itself will be encouraged and supported.

This applies to the armed forces of every nation. There is no national government at this time organized by, for, and under the control of its citizens.

4. Military Initiative does not advocate individual disobedience to orders or desertion from the armed forces because members of the armed forces working together is most effective.

That said, Military Initiative will assist in the defense of troops who see individual desertion or refusal of orders as the only course of action open to them for reasons of conscience.

5. Military Initiative practices organizational democracy.

This means control of the organization by the membership, through elected delegates to any coordinating bodies that may be formed, whether at local, regional, or national levels. Anyone elected is subject to recall, by majority vote of the membership.

Any coordinating bodies will report their decisions and votes to the membership, and may be overruled by a majority of the membership.

6. It is unnecessary for Military Initiative to be in complete political agreement with other organizations to work together toward a common objective.

Organizations working together on common objectives need to discuss differences about the best way forward.

7. The mission of Military Initiative is to bring together in one organization members of the armed forces and civilians who are dedicated to these objectives.

In order to be prepared to defend and extend human rights and economic justice, we will meet together to organize wherever we may be, engaging in such activities as may be necessary, reasonable and effective.

Membership Requirements:

8. Civilian member participate in organized action to reach out to and work with active duty armed forces.

9. Military Initiative or individual members may choose to support candidates for elective office who are for immediate withdrawal from Afghanistan and Iraq, but do not support candidates opposed to immediate, unconditional withdrawal.

10. Members may not be active duty or drilling reserve commissioned officers, or employed in any capacity by any police or intelligence agency, local, state, or national.

11. I understand and am in agreement with this mission.

I oppose bigotry against people because of their race, religion, national origin, gender, or sexual orientation.

I pledge to defend my brothers and sisters, and the democratic rights of the citizens of the United States, against all enemies, foreign and domestic.

----- (Signed)

(Date)

----- (Application taken by)

**Military Initiative: Contact@militaryproject.org
Box 126, 2576 Broadway,
New York, N.Y. 10025-5657**

MORE

You Can Take Action That Makes A Difference: Join The Military Initiative: MILITARY INITIATIVE MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name (please print): _____

Armed Forces? (Branch) _____

Veteran? Years: _____

Union: _____

Occupation: _____

Mailing address: _____

E-Mail: _____

Phone (Landline): _____

Phone (Cell): _____

\$ dues paid _____
(See next: Calendar year basis.)

Armed Forces Members	@	Dues waived
Civilians	@	\$25
Students/Unemployed	@	\$10
Civilian/Military Prisoners	@	Dues Waived

Comments:

NOTE: Civilian applicants will be interviewed, in person if possible, or by phone.

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“People Need Not Be Helpless Before The Power Of Illegitimate Authority”

[Based on a statement by David Cortright, Vietnam Veteran and armed forces resistance organizer.]

In the final analysis the stationing of American forces abroad serves not the national interest but the class interest of the corporate and political elite.

The maintenance of a massive, interventionist-oriented military establishment is based on the need to protect multinational investment and preserve regimes friendly to American capital.

Imperialism is at the heart of the national-security system and is the force fundamentally responsible for the counterrevolutionary, repressive aims of U.S. policy.

Only if we confront this reality and challenge it throughout society and within the ranks can we restore democratic control of the military.

Of course nothing can be accomplished without citizen involvement and active political struggle.

During the Vietnam era enlisted servicemen created massive pressures for change, despite severe repression, and significantly altered the course of the war and subsequent military policy.

To sustain and strengthen this challenge we must continue to build political opposition to interventionism and support those within the armed services, including national guard and reserves, who defy the goals and program of Empire.

The central lesson of the GI movement is that people need not be helpless before the power of illegitimate authority, that by getting together and acting upon their convictions people can change society and, in effect, make their own history.

Military Initiative

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MILITARY NEWS

Syria: “For Some, ‘Anti-Imperialism’ Today Means Supporting Whichever Superpower Can Better Slaughter Civilian Truck-Drivers”



Destroyed trucks in the Idlib province following Russian air strikes in an area not under the control of Islamic State. REUTERS

Dec 11, 2015 by mkaradjis via Marxism

In recent weeks, US and Russian warplanes bombing Syria have been targeting trucks allegedly transporting “ISIS oil.”

Indeed, Russian leaders have accused Turkey of being a major market for this “ISIS oil”, a claim that indicates spectacular hypocrisy given the very well-known, long-term oil trade between ISIS and Russia’s ally, the Syrian genocide regime.

Of course, as is well known, ISIS sells oil to hundreds of small private traders who then transport it to whoever wants to buy it, which can include Kurdish authorities, Syrian rebels, Turkey or the Assad regime.

While Russia has focused almost entirely on bombing the Free Syrian Army (FSA), indeed in provinces and regions with zero ISIS presence, even to the point of directly facilitating ISIS advances against the rebels (as in northern Aleppo over the last fortnight), it has also taken some potshots against ISIS, above all slaughtering civilians in Raqqa and destroying civilian infrastructure.

One form of “fighting ISIS” has been bombing these impoverished drivers who make their living by transporting oil or other goods from whoever wants to sell them to whoever wants to buy them.

Soon after Russia invaded Syria, the US also began bombing these civilian trucks and killing their drivers. The US had already been bombing civilian oil infrastructure under ISIS control for a year or so.

One of the talking points of the pro-Russian imperialist “anti-imperialists” then became that “the US only began bombing the oil trucks after Our Mother Russia first bombed them goddamned terrorists.”

For some it seems, “anti-imperialism” today, oddly, means supporting whichever superpower can better slaughter civilian truck-drivers doing their job in a poor country far from home. That is quite a sensational development.

An article which, quite correctly and uncontroversially, points out that Assad buys more “ISIS oil” than anyone else, also gives a good description of how small-scale, insecure and desperate these middle people are:

“The trucks don’t have to go far to sell ISIS oil. In fact, it’s cheaper and easier for them to sell oil to locals who run basic refineries in the countryside, not far from the main oil fields in eastern Syria ...

With few exceptions, these backyard refineries are just stills in which small batches of oil are heated and the resulting vapor is condensed into low-grade fuel. The owners, usually desperate Arab families who don’t belong to ISIS, run several at a time.

The work is dirty and dangerous; the scene is apocalyptic. Toxic plumes of black smoke, scorched earth, soot, and explosions make Mad Max look tame. Hundreds if not thousands of these stills are now active across Syria. Combined, they provide tens of thousands of barrels in daily refining capacity.

Fuel from these refineries is sold at roadside pumping stations or in bulk to middlemen who deliver it to population centers where demand is greater” (<http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2015/12/10/isis-is-the-con-ed-of-syria.html?via=desktop&source=twitter>).

These are the people that some “anti-imperialists” think are criminals who the superpowers should blow to bits from the sky if they are serious about “fighting ISIS.”

Moreover, just because Russian media showed pictures of trucks allegedly crossing the Turkish border, hardly proves they are all necessarily transporting oil. According to the truck drivers in this video, many of them are transporting food or other goods to supply

some of the millions of Syrian refugees in Turkey, and they constantly get bombed by the Russian airforce:

<https://www.facebook.com/solidaysyria/videos/994351503941585/?fref=nf>

While it may be difficult to vouch for the validity of what these truck-drivers are saying, that is hardly different from a great deal of “information” floating around the region, above all from the Russian and Iranian versions of Fox News which are mere propaganda organs for the Assad regime.

Between a belligerent invading state’s media showing pictures of trucks and calling them “ISIS,” and bombing and killing working people trying desperately to make a living, and truck drivers in a video claiming to be delivering food, I’ll take my bets on the latter.

Nearly 90% Of Those Killed By US Drones Were Not Intended Targets During Five-Month Span:

“The U.S. Assumes All Military-Age Males In A Strike Zone Are Potential Enemy Combatants”

“The Civilian Toll Has Turned The Local Population Against U.S. Forces”

“Disclosures Make A Mockery Of U.S. Government Claims That Lethal Force Operations Are Based On Reliable Intelligence And Limited To Lawful Targets”

Nearly 90 percent of the people killed by U.S. drone strikes in Afghanistan over a five-month period were not the intended targets.

The Pentagon internally admitted in 2013 that U.S. drone strikes are often carried out based on faulty intelligence. Even when drone strikes do kill the intended target, the Pentagon found, the killing may compromise more valuable intelligence-gathering operations.

Those are among the key revelations of a bombshell report published by the Intercept Thursday. The report, based on information passed along from a source involved in the operations, provides a rare glimpse into the classified U.S. drone operations throughout the Middle East between 2011 and 2013.

The Obama administration has consistently declined to discuss drone operations publicly other than to tell the public that each strike is the targeted killing of a person who constituted an imminent threat to U.S. national security.

Documents published by the Intercept contradict those assurances.

One 2013 document circulated by the Pentagon's Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance unit details how the U.S. government continuously updates a profile on potential targets. They're each assigned a number, colloquially known as the terror suspect's "baseball card," at which point it took President Obama an average of 58 days to approve a strike on that person.

"Anyone caught in the vicinity is guilty by association," the source told the Intercept. If "a drone strike kills more than one person, there is no guarantee that those persons deserved their fate ... so it's a phenomenal gamble."

Strikes are carried out faster in Afghanistan and Iraq, U.S. warzones, than in Yemen and Somalia.

Previous reports revealed that the U.S. assumes all military-age males in a strike zone are potential enemy combatants.

Former drone operators have also come forward to say many of the hundreds of strikes carried out since 2004 were based on metadata intercepted from a target's phone. This remained true even after targets learned of the operational strategy and handed off their phones to unwitting strangers, the ex-drone operator said.

The Bureau of Investigative Journalism estimated in April that 522 strikes have killed 3,852 people, including 476 civilians, though estimates vary widely.

"These eye-opening disclosures make a mockery of U.S. government claims that its lethal force operations are based on reliable intelligence and limited to lawful targets," Hina Shamsi, director of the American Civil Liberties Union National Security Project, said in a statement.

"In fact, the government often claims successes that are really tragic losses. The Obama administration's lethal program desperately needs transparency and accountability because it is undermining the right to life and national security."

The civilian toll has also turned the local population against U.S. forces, undercutting many of the military's goals in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The Pentagon, attempting to rectify the dichotomy, has pushed for more advanced surveillance drones and recommended capturing more suspects rather than killing them.

"The military is easily capable of adapting to change, but they don't like to stop anything they feel is making their lives easier, or is to their benefit.

"And this certainly is, in their eyes, a very quick, clean way of doing things" compared to putting American soldiers in danger, the source told the Intercept.

"But at this point, they have become so addicted to this machine, to this way of doing business, that it seems like it's going to become harder and harder to pull them away from it the longer they're allowed to continue operating in this way."

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS



"At a time like this, scorching irony, not convincing argument, is needed. Oh had I the ability, and could reach the nation's ear, I would, pour out a fiery stream of biting ridicule, blasting reproach, withering sarcasm, and stern rebuke.

"For it is not light that is needed, but fire; it is not the gentle shower, but thunder.

“We need the storm, the whirlwind, and the earthquake.”

“The limits of tyrants are prescribed by the endurance of those whom they oppose.”

Frederick Douglass, 1852

**It is a two class world and the wrong class is running it.
-- Larry Christensen, Soldiers Of Solidarity & United Auto Workers**

The only glory in war



Photograph by Mike Hastie

From: Mike Hastie
To: Military Resistance Newsletter
Sent: Friday, December 04, 2015
Subject: My 2 cents on "Thank You For Your Service"

***The only glory in war is in the imagination
of those who were never there.***

Mike Hastie

Army Medic Vietnam

Joe was a U.S. Marine who fought at the Battle of Khe Sanh. Many of his friends were killed. This photo was taken in Salem, Oregon in 1989, just after Joe had spent a long time viewing the "Moving Wall" at the state fair grounds.

Photo and caption from the portfolio of Mike Hastie, US Army Medic, Vietnam 1970-71. (For more of his outstanding work, contact at: hastiemike@earthlink.net) T)

One day while I was in a bunker in Vietnam, a sniper round went over my head. The person who fired that weapon was not a terrorist, a rebel, an extremist, or a so-called insurgent. The Vietnamese individual who tried to kill me was a citizen of Vietnam, who did not want me in his country. This truth escapes millions.

Mike Hastie
U.S. Army Medic
Vietnam 1970-71
December 13, 2004

DANGER: CAPITALISTS AT WORK

**Declines And Defaults In High-Yield Bonds Are Worrying Wall Street;
“Junk Bonds Are Headed For Their First Annual Loss Since The Credit Crisis”**

“In Most High-Default Periods We’ve Seen In The Past, The Rise In Default Rates Precedes A Recession”
“When Investors Stop Funding Triple-C Debt, It Typically Means Bad Things For The Market, With A Default Peak Within 20 Months,”

Comment Again: T

The point here is that in recent months the Wall Street Journal has been running articles very carefully and very quietly screaming alarm about the possible collapse [that’s what “snarling” means] of bond markets, and with that, economic nightmares unimaginable. For example, massive defaults on trillion dollars of debt, worldwide.

That’s only *one* problem, as the article below very carefully and very quietly screams oops points out.

Dec. 7, 2015 By Matt Wirz. [Excerpts] Mike Cherney contributed to this article.

Junk bonds are headed for their first annual loss since the credit crisis, reflecting concerns among investors that a six-year U.S. economic expansion and accompanying stock-market boom are on borrowed time.

U.S. corporate high-yield bonds are down 2% this year, including interest payments, according to Barclays PLC data. Junk bonds have posted only four annual losses on a total-return basis since 1995.

The declines are worrying Wall Street because junk-market declines have a reputation for foreshadowing economic downturns.

Junk bonds are lagging behind U.S. stocks following a debt selloff in the past month. The S&P 500 has returned 3.6% on the year, including dividends.

Adding to the worries are signs that the selling has spread beyond firms hit by the energy bust to encompass much of the lowest-rated debt across the market, potentially snarling some takeovers and making it difficult for all kinds of companies to borrow new funds.

In the fourth quarter of the year, there has been a “meaningful disconnect between equities and high yield,” said George Bory, head of credit strategy at Wells Fargo Securities. “It’s a warning sign about the potential challenges in the economy.”

High-yield bonds pay high interest rates, typically above 7%, because the heavily indebted companies that issue them are more likely to default.

Investors flock to the debt in boom times when other securities pay minimal interest and often dump it just as quickly when they get nervous, making junk bonds a bellwether for risk appetite.

Defaults are rising after several years near historically low levels, as new bond sales stall and companies with below-investment-grade credit ratings struggle to refinance their debts.

The junk-bond default rate rose to 2.6% from 2.1% this year and will likely jump to 4.3% in 2016, breaching the 30-year average of 3.8% for the first time since 2009, said New York University Finance Professor Edward Altman, inventor of the most commonly used default-prediction formula.

Mounting defaults signal an end to the six-year bull run in credit fueled by the Federal Reserve’s long commitment to low interest rates, said Mr. Altman. He said downturns in the junk-bond market often presage stock-price declines and economic slowdowns.

“In most high-default periods we’ve seen in the past, the rise in default rates precedes a recession,” said Mr. Altman, who has been studying the subject for more than 50 years.

Oil and gas producers have struggled the most, and the pace of their defaults is accelerating. Swift Energy Co. missed a bond payment last week, while EXCO Resources Inc. and SandRidge Energy Inc. restructured bonds in November.

Investors who took losses in energy are now selling bonds of heavily indebted companies with weak performance in other sectors. Clothing retailer J. Crew Group Inc.’s bonds traded at 27 cents on the dollar last week, down 67% since June.

Bank of America credit strategist Michael Contopoulos cites signs that investors are steering clear of new bonds from the riskiest high-yield companies with triple-C credit ratings.

“When investors stop funding triple-C debt, it typically means bad things for the market, with a default peak within 20 months,” says Mr. Contopoulos, one of the few Wall Street analysts to predict the slide in high yield at the start of the year.

Two other indicators are also signaling a possible turning point.

Corporate mergers and acquisitions—often funded with junk bonds—hit record levels this year, while the ratio of high-yield debt to corporate earnings is approaching an all-time high. Anxious debt markets and softening corporate earnings could limit further growth in those areas, traders said.

To be sure, the bottom hasn't fallen out of the market. Higher-rated junk-bond issuers continue to find buyers for their bonds, and the retreat from risk so far is unfolding gradually.

By contrast, junk bonds fell 26% in 2008.

Energy junk bonds are down 14% this year. Heavy-industry junk bonds have fallen 15% in 2015 and pharmaceuticals have fallen 8% since September, according to data from Barclays.

While investors are still buying some bonds in growth industries, such as restaurants and gambling, price drops for out-of-favor bonds have been fast and furious this year.

That's in part because new regulations have sharply curtailed trading by Wall Street banks, which cushioned past selloffs by buying bonds.

Two years ago, for instance, Sprint Corp. sold \$6.5 billion of high-yield bonds in a single day, a record at the time.

But concerns have grown about the firm's ability to pay its debts: When Moody's Investors Service cut Sprint's credit rating in September, the company's bonds dropped 20% within two weeks.

Wealth Therapists Tackles Woes Of The Rich: “Being In The 1%, It Turns Out, Can Be Lonely” “Since The 2008 Financial Crisis, The Income Gap Has Expanded And The Situation ‘Has Gotten Worse For The Wealthy’, Cockrell Said” “Protests Can Be Very Stressful For The Rich”

17 October 2015 by Jana Kasperkevic, The Guardian

It's a rainy Wednesday morning and Clay Cockrell is sitting in his office at Columbus Circle across the street from 1 Central Park West, which houses Trump International Hotel and Tower. In front of the tower is Central Park, where Cockrell holds his popular walk and talk therapy sessions.

Dressed in comfortable pants and a flannel shirt, Cockrell, a former Wall Street worker turned therapist, spends large parts of his days walking through Central Park or the Battery Park in downtown Manhattan near Wall Street, as a confidant and counsellor to some of the New York's wealthiest.

"I shifted toward it naturally," he said of his becoming an expert in wealth therapy.

"We are trained to have empathy, no judgment and so many of the uber wealthy – the 1% of the 1% – they feel that their problems are really not problems. But they are. A lot of therapists do not give enough weight to their issues."

And as they stroll through Manhattan, what issues are America's 1% struggling with?

There is guilt over being rich in the first place, he said.

There is the feeling that they have to hide the fact that they are rich. And then there is the isolation – being in the 1%, it turns out, can be lonely. It seems F Scott Fitzgerald was right, the very rich "are different from you and me". Especially in 2015.

From the Bible to the Lannisters of Game of Thrones, it's easy to argue that the rich have always been vilified, scorned and envied. But their counsellors argue things have only gotten worse since the financial crisis and the debate over income inequality that has been spurred on by movements like Occupy Wall Street and the Fight for \$15 fair wage campaign.



"The Occupy Wall Street movement was a good one and had some important things to say about income inequality, but it singled out the 1% and painted them globally as something negative. It's an -ism," said Jamie Traeger-Muney, a wealth psychologist and founder of the Wealth Legacy Group.

"I am not necessarily comparing it to what people of color have to go through, but ... it really is making value judgment about a particular group of people as a whole."

The media, she said, is partly to blame for making the rich “feel like they need to hide or feel ashamed”.

Traeger-Muney, who moved to Israel six years ago, runs a global firm and specializes in working with inheritors, who often get a bad reputation in the press.

“You can come up with lot of words and sayings about inheritors, not one of them is positive: spoiled brat, born with a silver spoon in their mouth, trust fund babies, all these things,” she said, adding that it’s “easy to scapegoat the rich”.

“Sometimes I am shocked by things that people say. If you substitute in the word Jewish or black, you would never say something like that. You’d never say – spoiled rotten or you would never refer to another group of people in the way that it seems perfectly normal to refer to wealth holders.”

In recent years, members of the 1% have been singled out by protesters seeking to highlight the growing disparity between rich and poor. In October of 2014, for example, a number of workers staged a protest outside Walmart heiress Alice Walton’s \$26m 6,346 sq ft New York condo. The protest, designed to highlight workers’ low wages and part-time schedules, resulted in 26 arrests.

These types of protests can be very stressful for the rich. “It’s really isolating to have a lot of money. It can be scary – people’s reaction to you,” said Barbara Nusbaum, an expert in money psychology.

“There is a fair amount of isolation if you are wealthy. We are all taught not to talk about money. It’s not polite to talk about money. In itself, ironically, it’s harder to talk about having money than it is to talk about not having money. It’s much more socially acceptable to say: ‘I am broke. Things are hard.’ You can’t say: ‘I have a ton of money.’ You have to keep a lot of your life private except in small circles.”

As a result, Cockrell points out, the rich tend to hang out with other rich Americans, not out of snobbery, but in order to be around those who understand them and their problems. [!]

The growing gap between the poor and rich is a global phenomenon.

According to Oxfam, the richest 1% have seen their share of global wealth increase from 44% in 2009 to 48% in 2014 and are on track to own more than the other 99% by 2016.

In US, over the last three decades, the wealth owned by the top 0.1% households increased from 7% to 22% even as the wealth of the bottom 90% of households declined.

Since the 2008 financial crisis, the income gap has expanded and the situation “has gotten worse for the wealthy”, Cockrell said.

The main reason? Not knowing if your friends are friends with you or your money.

“Someone else who is also a billionaire – they don’t want anything from you! Never being able to trust your friendships with people of different means, I think that is difficult,” said Cockrell. “As the gap has widened, they (the rich) have become more and more isolated.”

These are real fears faced by the richest of the rich. In 2007, the Gates Foundation teamed up with Boston College’s Center on Wealth and Philanthropy to document what it felt like to be in America’s 1%. For the next four years, researchers surveyed 165 of America’s richest households – 120 of those households have at least \$25m in assets. The average net worth of those surveyed was \$78m.

The resulting study, *The Joys and Dilemmas of Wealth*, was 500 pages long and seemed to prove the old adage that money can’t buy happiness.

“Wealth can be a barrier to connecting with other people,” confessed a spouse of a tech entrepreneur who made about \$80m. “Not feeling you should share some of the stressors in your life (‘Yeah, wouldn’t I like to have your problems’), awkwardness re: who should pay at a restaurant.”

To avoid such awkwardness, some Americans have taken to keeping their wealth secret. “We talk about it as stealth wealth. There are a lot of people that are hiding their wealth because they are concerned about negative judgment,” said Traeger-Muney. If wealthy Americans talk about the unique challenges that come with their wealth, people often dismiss their experience.

“People say: ‘Oh, poor you.’ There is not a lot of sympathy there,” she said. “(Wealth) is still one of our last taboos. Often, I use an analogy with my clients that coming out to people about their wealth is similar to coming out of the closet as gay. There’s a feeling of being exposed and dealing with judgment.”

Speaking in his soft, soothing voice that makes you want to spill all your worries, Cockrell said that a common mistake that many of his wealthy clients make is letting their money define them.

“I don’t think it’s healthy to discount your problems. If you are part of the 1%, you still have problems and they are legitimate to you. Even when you say: ‘I don’t have to struggle for money’, there are other parts of your life. Money is not the only thing that defines you,” he said. “Your problems are legitimate.”

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OCCUPATION PALESTINE

Zionists Open Fire On Students In Attack At Palestinian Technical University

“Six Students Suffered Moderate Wounds After The Soldiers Shot Them With Live Rounds”

December 07, 2015 by IMEMC & Agencies

Israeli soldiers invaded, Monday, several parts of the Palestinian Technical University, west of the northern West Bank city of Tulkarem, and clashed with dozens of students, wounding 19, including six with live fire.

The soldiers surrounded the university, and fired dozens of rounds of live ammunition, rubber-coated steel bullets and gas bombs, during clashes with many Palestinians after the army invaded the campus.

Medical sources said six students suffered moderate wounds after the soldiers shot them with live rounds, thirteen others were shot with rubber-coated steel bullets, and scores suffered the effects of tear gas inhalation.

The Palestinians, who were shot with live fire, have been transferred to Thabet Thabet Hospital, in Tulkarem, and the rest received treatment by Red Crescent medics.

The University, also known as Kadoorie, has been the subject to repeated Israeli military invasions and clashes, especially since the army has a base that was established on lands illegally confiscated from it.

Occupation Forces Shoot Out The Eye Of Palestinian Teen:

“Their Child Was Shot After Leaving School Accompanied With His Father”

December 07, 2015 by IMEMC News & Agencies

5-year-old Khalil Mohammed Ahmed Kiswani is now in the intensive care unit of Hadassah Ein Kerem hospital, in Jerusalem, after an eye amputation.

Kiswani was shot in his left eye with a rubber-coated metal bullet fired by Israeli forces during a raid on Shu'fat refugee camp, last Wednesday.



Kiswani's family explained, according to Al Ray, that their child was shot after leaving school accompanied with his father.

Kiswani sustained a brain hemorrhage and fractures to his skull, leading to the amputation of his left eye.

The family said that their son has undergone four surgeries in recent days, as medics attempted to quell the internal bleeding which had occurred.

Some 1,200 members of the Israeli army stormed into Shu'fat, last Wednesday, to demolish the home of Ibrahim Akkari, provoking the outbreak of violent clashes between Palestinian youth and Israeli soldiers.

**Just A Tiny Little Aspect Of The
Everyday Humiliation Defining
This Zionist Military
Occupation:
“Settlers Often Attack Palestinians
Cars, And Soldiers Stop And
Search Cars With Palestinian
License Plates”**

“You Are Always Perceived As A Threat, A Possible Terrorist Or A Menace – But Never As A Human Being”

“The Heavily Armed Soldiers Have The ‘Authority’ To Decide Over Everything, The Palestinian Passengers Will Have To Obey Whatever Is Asked Of Them”



Israeli soldiers and the flying checkpoint outside the village

6th of December 2015 International Solidarity Movement, al-Khalil team

Hebron, occupied Palestine

Palestinians living in the Israeli militarily occupied West Bank face discrimination, racism and humiliation at the hands of Israeli forces on an everyday basis.

Humiliation is entrenched in every aspect of daily life under the Israeli occupation. The message is clear: as a Palestinian you are always perceived as a threat, a possible terrorist or a menace – but never as a human being.

As a Palestinian citizen of the West Bank, freedom of movement is severely restricted and rather resembles trying to navigate a maze of road-blocks, permanent checkpoints and temporary 'flying checkpoints' that can suddenly pop up anywhere.

All of these restrictions share one commonality: they are clearly intended to target only Palestinians – while Israeli settlers from the illegal settlements in the occupied West Bank are using roads that might not even be allowed for Palestinians to drive on.

In occupied al-Khalil (Hebron), the Israeli bus collecting passengers from the illegal settlements is not allowed for Palestinians to ride on, and thus passes Bethlehem checkpoint on the way to Jerusalem without even stopping – all the passengers are Israeli settlers anyways.

On the Palestinian bus going through the same checkpoint, everyone, with the exception of tourists and elderly, are forced to get off the bus and wait for their IDs to be checked outside in any weather, and often their bags inspected by heavily-armed soldiers

Right during rush hour on Thursday afternoon, Israeli forces set up checkpoints at all the entrances of occupied al-Khalil, resulting in endless queues of cars, on their way to visit family over the weekend on Friday and Saturday.

As two soldiers thoroughly checked every passenger's ID and car going in both directions, the queues grew longer and even ambulances with emergencies were denied passage and held up for at least ten minutes while being checked – ten minutes that hopefully weren't critical for the emergency the ambulance was attempting to quickly get to.

As Israeli forces strategically blocked every possible way to leave or enter al-Khalil either by permanent road-blocks completely blocking any sort of traffic except pedestrians or temporary checkpoints; there was no possible alternative than to either turn around and stay inside the city or to endure at least two hours of waiting to eventually be allowed to pass this checkpoint.

Finally passing one checkpoint successfully, though, in militarily occupied Palestine basically doesn't mean anything: just a few hundred meters down the street might be another checkpoint.

Palestinians try to avoid Gush Etzion junction on the way to Bethlehem, as settlers often attack Palestinians cars there, and soldiers stop and search cars with Palestinian license plates only; they take a detour through Palestinian villages.

But in order to make the near-lockdown of al-Khalil 'perfect', Israeli forces set up checkpoints at entrances and exits of Sa'ir village.

Thus, after an hour-long wait to leave al-Khalil city itself, Palestinian cars were stuck in yet another checkpoint just a twenty minutes drive away.

Waiting in the dark for seemingly endless hours to move ahead just one or two more meters in the line as a car was allowed to pass – or turned around, giving up the hope of ever crossing that night at all; Israeli settler cars speed past on a nearby road without any hurdles or hassles, just 'normaly' driving down a road at night.

When finally slowly approaching the make-shift checkpoint with traffic spikes on the street, cars have to switch off their lights, so people next in line will only hazily see what's going on.

Once it's their turn, everyone inside the car has to get out and stand a few meters away from the soldiers, while they inspect the IDs and cars.

Depending on the soldiers mood, some people, mainly young adult males, will have to lift up their shirts and trouser-legs; while others will have to answer questions about their destinations and the reason of travels, and even about their families and private life.

The only thing that is for sure is that you can never tell what will happen.

The power dynamics is clear, the heavily armed soldiers have the 'authority' to decide over everything, the Palestinian passengers will have to obey whatever is asked of them.

That none of this has to do with 'security' but everything with control and humiliation is obvious.

This is the face of just a tiny little aspect of the everyday humiliation defining this military occupation.

Humiliation doesn't even stop with death – the Israeli forces are still withholding the bodies of Palestinians they claim attacked Israeli soldiers – refusing an appropriate funeral and mourning for their families, relatives and friends.

Denying even a last peaceful rest and a person's family to mourn the death of a loved one is the last possible way to humiliate.

Not even in death, does the humiliation stop or are Palestinians treated like human beings.

To check out what life is like under a murderous military occupation commanded by foreign terrorists, go to:

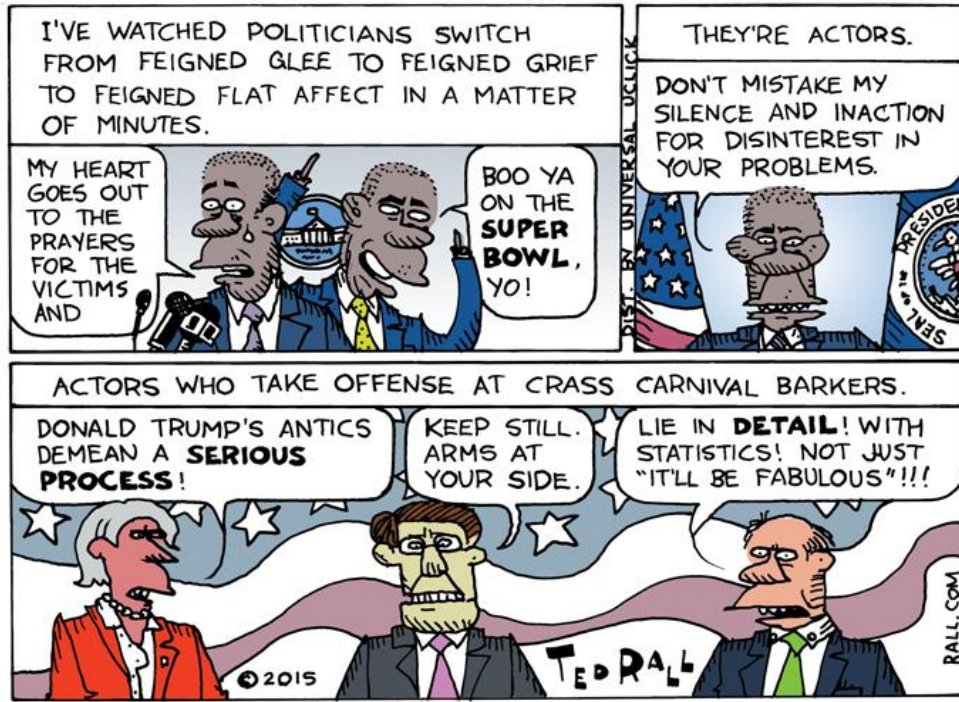
<http://www.palestinechronicle.com/>

The occupied nation is Palestine. The foreign terrorists call themselves "Israeli."

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DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



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